GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2415
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2003
USE OF CONCRETE SLEEPERS
ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the durability of concrete sleeper is much more than that of wooden sleepers;

(b) if so, whether the costs of wooden sleepers is also much more than that of concrete sleepers;

(c) if so the facts thereof;

(d) whether the Government are still allow the use of wooden sleeper inspite of its high cost and its low durability and adverse affect on environment;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor;

(f) the loss suffered by the Railways by way of placing order for wooden sleepers in place of concrete sleepers; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government against the officials held responsible for placing order for wooden sleepers?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir,

(c) The approx. cost of one set of wooden sleepers for a 1:12 turnout is Rs. 1,53,100/- and that of concrete sleepers turnoutis around Rs. one lakh. No wooden sleepers are being procured for mainline while on girder bridges only wooden sleepers can be used. Cost comparison can be drawn only for Turnout sleepers for which both types of sleepers are being procured.

(d) Indian Railways has been successfully able to develop alternative sleepers to wooden sleepers for Main line, standard Turnouts, Level Crossings, Switch Expansion Joints, Ballasted Deck Bridges etc. but for certain specified locations like, special layouts such as scissiors cross overs, Diamond X-ings, slips etc. and, Turnouts involving non standard crossing angles, there are no alternatives available to wooden sleepers. Due to these technical constraints, Hon`ble Supreme Court has permitted Railways to procure 20,000 Cum. of wooden sleepers by way of import annually, to meet its absolute minimum requirement. As these sleepers are to be made only out of imported wood as such there will be no adverse effect on environment.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Does not arise. Railways is using wooden sleepers only on such locations for which no suitable alternatives to wooden sleepers are available. As such, the use of wooden sleepers at such locations is inescapable to maintain the track in safe running conditions, and thus any additional expenditure on this account cannot be construed as a loss.

(g) Does not arise.